

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 through 8 are pending in this application. Claims 5 through 8 have been added.

The Office Action objects to claims 2 and 3 for lack of proper antecedent basis. Claims 2 and 3 have been amended to obviate this objection.

The Office Action rejects claims 1 through 4 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 3,602,009 to Powell (hereinafter "Powell"). The Office Action's rejection is based upon the embodiment of Figure 2 in Powell.

Applicant submits that Powell fails to disclose or even suggest the feature of claim 1 of a locking/unlocking lever that has a hinge pin pivotally connected to the holder and disposed opposite to the button and hook portions along a length of the locking/unlocking lever. Powell shows a plastic latch 154 disposed about a metal sleeve member 152 for coupling a speedometer cable to a speedometer input shaft. The latch 154 has a semi-circular base portion 162 attached to a larger ring portion 164 by a spider wall 166. Powell does not have a hinge pin that is pivotally connected to the holder.

The Office Action asserts that the spider walls 166 in Powell are hinge pins. However, the Powell specification contradicts this assertion:

As sleeve 152 is slid onto the stationary boss 114, the spider 166 **gives the necessary flexibility** to the completely separate molded latch 154, whereupon, hook 170 falls into the annular groove or recess 126 of the stationary bar locking the cable by means of ferrule 130 to the rear end of the speedometer casing. (col. 3, lines 65-70) (emphasis added).

The spider walls 166 are biasing members as described above. They are not hinge pins and they clearly are not "pivotally connected to the holder", as in claim 1. Claims 2 through 4 depend from claim 1 and, thus, are also not anticipated by Powell.

Additionally, claim 2 includes the feature of the locking/unlocking lever having an open

end, wherein the hinge pin is disposed in proximity to the open end, and wherein the operation handle can be inserted into the open end. Powell fails to disclose or suggest this feature of claim 2. As described above, Powell fails to disclose or suggest the hinge pin. Moreover, as shown in FIG. 2 of Powell, the spider wall 166 is disposed on the opposite end from the open end where the cylindrical boss 114 of the speedometer input shaft is inserted into the latch 154.

Also, claim 3 includes the feature of the hinge pin being two hinge pins that are disposed on opposing sides of the locking/unlocking lever. As described above, Powell does not disclose or suggest a hinge pin, let alone two hinge pins that are disposed on opposing sides of the locking/unlocking lever, as in claim 3.

Newly added claims 5 through 8 are directed to a vacuum cleaner and include features such as a vacuum source, an operation handle and an extension pipe. In contrast, Powell describes a plastic ferrule, which couples a speedometer cable to a speedometer input shaft. Powell fails to describe or suggest the features of claim 5 of the vacuum source, operation handle or extension pipe. Claims 6 through 8 depend from claim 5 and, thus, are also not anticipated by Powell.

Additionally, claim 6 includes the feature of hinge pins that pivotally connect the locking/unlocking lever with the holder. For the reasons described above with respect to claim 1, Powell fails to disclose or suggest this feature of claim 6.

Also, claim 8 includes the feature of the locking/unlocking lever having an open end, wherein the hinge pins are disposed in proximity to the open end, and wherein the operation handle can be inserted into the open end. As described above with respect to claim 2, Powell does not describe hinge pins and also does not describe the locking/unlocking lever having an open end, with the hinge pins being disposed in proximity to the open end, and the operation handle being insertable into the open end, as in claim 8.

In view of the foregoing, applicants respectfully submit that all claims present in this application patentably distinguish over the cited prior art, namely Powell. Accordingly,

applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections and rejections of the claims. Also, applicants respectfully request that this application be passed to allowance.

Dated: 6-18-04



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